

CITIZENS TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

A Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, May 23, 2000 at 5:00 p.m.** at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Transportation Board Room, with William G. Beyer, Chairman, presiding.

Members Present:

William G. Beyer, Chairman
Brian Campbell, Member-At-Large
Scott Newton, Maricopa County District 1
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

Members Absent:

Isaac Serna, Maricopa County District 5

Others Present:

Carolyn Deobler, ADOT
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Ellen Price, AAM Management
Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT
Matt Burdick, ADOT
Victor Mendez, ADOT
Chuck Williams, MCDOT
Mike Sabatini, MCDOT
Kim Hildebrand, Auditor General
Dick Wright, ADOT
Frank Schmuck, Tempe Citizen

Terry Johnson, MAG
Fred Garcia, ADOT
Jack White, HOA
Doris S. Schwartz, guest
Ed Johnson, Youngtown, AZ
Dave Vowles, guest
Bill Hahn, MCDOT
Wm. C. "Blue" Crowley
Deb Shriver, PVVPC & 32nd Shea
Dan Lance, ADOT

1. Call to Order

Chairman Beyer called the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of the March 21, 2000 meeting

Chairman Beyer called for a motion. Ron Gawlitta moved to approve the minutes for the March 21, 2000 CTOC meeting. Jim Lykins seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Staff Report

Chuck Eaton addressed the Committee regarding the following status report:

FY2001 – FY2007 MAG Area Life Cycle Construction Program

ADOT staff is preparing the final FY 2001-2007 MAG Area Life Cycle Construction Program for presentation and approval by the Transportation Board at their June 9, 2000 Board meeting in Kingman. Changes to the Tentative Program presented for public comment include: Updated Project Costs; Added funding for South Mountain EIS/DCR; Adjusted Landscape Project limits on Agua Fria and the Pima; and updated system wide costs (Preliminary Engineering, Design Change Orders and Utility locating).

2000 Performance Audit of the Regional Freeway System

The 2000 Performance Audit of the Regional Freeway System continues. The audit consists of a review of past and planned future expenditures in solving transportation problems in the county, and the review of both completed and future projects. A draft report is expected by May 23 with a final report by July 1. A report on the progress of the Audit will be made as part of today's agenda.

Acceleration of the Squaw Peak Completion Project – Union Hills to Loop 101

ADOT and the City of Phoenix are working on an agreement that would fund the Squaw Peak Freeway, Union Hills to Loop 101 project to complete in 2003 along with the adjacent project to the south, Bell to Union Hills. Funding would be from a \$15 million State Infrastructure Bank loan and the project would be completed 18 month earlier. (Start - Summer 2001; Complete - Spring 2003)

PROJECTS SCHEDULED FOR BID ADVERTISEMENT:

Pima Freeway (Loop 101) – Scottsdale Road to Pima Road Interchanges – The project was advertised in early April. Bids will be opened on Friday, May 26. This project will help accommodate the end of freeway conditions once adjacent projects are completed in 2001, prior to the completion of the final project between Scottsdale and Pima.

Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) – Country Club Drive to Gilbert Road -- Construction bids were opened on May 17th. Pulice Construction was the low bidder at \$53.7 million, 19.6% under the State's Estimate of \$66.8 million. Board award is expected on June 2nd.

Red Mountain TI (Loop 101 / Loop202) Landscape – The landscape construction project will advertise this month.

U S 60 Superstition Freeway Widening (I-10 to Val Vista) – Request for Qualification (RFQ) was advertised on April 28th. Once RFQs are received, a selection panel will short-list those firms from which a Request for Proposals (RFP) is requested. RFPs are expected in July.

Loop 101/I-17 TI -- The landscape construction project was bid and awarded to Terra-Cal, the apparent low bidder at \$1.9 million.

I-10 /Guadalupe Bridge -- Bids were opened for bridge replacement. Kramer was low bidder at \$1.4 million.

UPDATES OF PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION:

Loop 101, E ½ I-17 Interchange – The mainline paving has been completed. The West to South and the North to East ramps are scheduled to open later this month. The project completion is targeted for late summer.

I-17 Design Build Project – All of the freeway ramps at Bethany Home Road are closed until mid-July. The project continues on schedule to complete in September.

SR 51 – Bell Road to Pima Fwy (Loop 101) – The City of Phoenix requested that ADOT remove the Black Mountain Pkwy Ramps at the SR 51/101 TI which were to be funded by the City. ADOT and the City are discussing how to proceed with design, considering the addition of these ramps in the future.

Cable Barrier Projects - The Phase I project to install median barriers on existing valley freeways was completed in April with Phase 2 expected to be completed around Memorial Day. Since the installation of the new barriers, there have been 39 hits and no fatalities.

OTHER PROJECT UPDATES:

Santan Freeway (Loop 202) -- Kyrene Road to McClintock – BRW was selected for final design.

Grand Avenue (US 60) – 30% plans are underway for the Thomas / 91st Avenue project and the Camelback / 51st Avenue project.

South Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) – A stakeholder meeting was held the first week of May to discuss corridor approach. It was decided that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Study should be done to establish the corridor plan and make the South Mountain project eligible for Federal Aid.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS:

Santan Freeway (Loop 202) I-10 /Maricopa Rd. TI -- The pre-draft of the EA is due in May.

SR 51 – Bell Road to Pima Freeway – The completed document for the EA update is due in May.

SUPPORT EVALUATION

The Regional Freeway System Office is interested in continuous improvement. A support evaluation survey was distributed to the CTOC members for completion.

CTOC REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING

In cooperation with North Valley Partnership, the CTOC Regional Public Meeting is scheduled for:

Tuesday, June 27, 2000 at 6:00 p.m.

Deer Valley School District Office
Governing Board Room
20402 North 15th Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

Ron Gawlitta requested representatives be invited that can respond to various questions, one question would be “why the off-ramps were deleted from the SR51/Pima Freeway, Black Mountain Parkway ramps. The public is concerned that Tatum Ranch would wind up, basically, in a cul-de-sac.”

INFORMATION REGARDING PREVIOUS REQUESTED ITEMS

Bike Pedestrian Crossing at I-17 / Grand Canal

The I-17 improvements do not displace, sever or impact any existing bike paths. There were no existing bike crossings of I-17 prior to this project.

I-17 improvements occur only in the median. There is no big advantage to including a project in the I-17 widening work.

- The EA was completed in 1993 prior to TEA 21.
- A project to construct a Bike / Pedestrian crossing in the area of the Grand Canal has been proposed to MAG for CMAQ funding.

A project has been included in the draft FY2001-2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in FY 2004) to build a pedestrian / bike bridge crossing near the Grand Canal and I-17 (\$3.3 CMAQ; \$0.2 COP match).

Chairman Beyer requested a summary (outline/bullets) regarding the reason the City of Phoenix elected to construct a bridge crossing in the area of Grand Canal as opposed to a tunnel.

Grand Ave. / Grand Canal (Between Indian School and Thomas) - The limits of the proposed intersection improvements at Thomas do not include the area of the Grand Canal. Barring Grand Avenue improvements that would impact the existing bike path, the City would be responsible for providing a crossing.

Interchange at Tuthill on I-10 (Airport Rd.)– Caterpillar Property

A developer has been pursuing the addition of an interchange at Airport Rd (Tuthill extended to I-10 from the south). ADOT is currently reviewing a draft change of access report prepared by the developer. ADOT has concern about the impact an additional TI has on the operation of I-10.

CANAMEX Study Status

- The technical analysis is complete.
- A draft report with recommendations is being prepared (end May)
- ADOT / MAG review and endorsement (June)
- Public involvement (July)

The Committee requested a copy of this report be distributed as soon as possible.

4. Status Report on 2000 Performance Audit

Kim Hildebrand of the Auditor General's Office addressed the Committee regarding the status of the 2000 Performance Audit. Ms. Hildebrand informed the committee when they can expect the final report; however, Ms. Hildebrand stated that the contents within the draft report is confidential between ADOT and the contractor.

A DRAFT report will be distributed on May 24th for ADOT and the Auditor General's review .

Written comments from ADOT will be returned to consultants within a couple of weeks.

Final report is anticipated to be complete in early July and will be distributed to CTOC members at that time.

5. ADOT/MAG HOV/Value Lane Study – Video

Mr. Bill Hayden of ADOT presented a video, "Buying Time", as related to High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and their efficiency, possibly selling space (user fee) for Single Occupant Vehicles to use the HOV lanes.

A study is currently being conducted to research whether these HOV lanes are being used to capacity, if not, would there be a way for a single occupant vehicle to use the HOV lanes? A final version of this study should be available for distribution this winter. The study will address the following questions:

- Is this concept politically acceptable in the Maricopa County area?
- Is it financially feasible?
- What could be the cost to implement a program of this nature?
- Would the public be willing to try this concept?

If this type of concept were to move forward, it would probably begin as a pilot program.

This type of program does involve legislative changes.

Mr. Schwartz inquired as to the elimination of the HOV lane and open it to the public (no charges, etc.). Chairman Beyer explained that there are some very significant federal requirements as to reasons there are HOV lanes.

6. Update on Loop 303 Projects

Mr. Mike Sabatini of McDOT addressed the Committee regarding updates on the Loop 303 projects. Mr. Sabatini introduced Chuck Williams, a Team Sponsor for McDOT for Loop 303, and Bill Hahn, Loop 303 Coordinator for McDOT.

History: Loop 303 was part of the Regional Freeway System plan; subsequently, this corridor was removed from the system, at which time, the State Transportation Board issued notice of route transfer of Loop 303 to McDOT and adjoining jurisdictions. McDOT elected to maintain Loop 303 as a regional type facility rather than change the character of the roadway. McDOT and ADOT made a recommendation to the State Transportation Board to maintain Loop 303 a state route. The State Transportation Board accepted this recommendation. Currently, the responsibilities of each agency are being identified.

Mr. Sabatini distributed "Bikeways in the Metropolitan Phoenix Area", "McDOT Road Update", and a "Maricopa County Public Works 1998-1999 Regional Map" (refer to handouts). Mr. Sabatini further distributed a Loop 303 map with alternatives. MAG and North Valley Partnership are additionally researching alternatives as to the location of Loop 303's connection with Interstate 17.

The southern most project that is being researched on Loop 303 begins approximately a quarter mile east of Cotton Lane near Thomas, where it jogs over to Cotton Lane and continues to Interstate 10. This project is designed to remove the jog with a reverse curve between Thomas Road and to a point south of McDowell Road. The access to Cotton Lane would curve and realign to Thomas Road. Cotton Lane itself would end as a cul-de-sac. The cost estimate for this project is \$2.8 million. ADOT would be contributing \$1.4 million to this project. This would be an interim project that would allow a future freeway connection, if in fact it does become a freeway connection in the ADOT Concept Alignment.

Ron Gawlitta stated that Cotton Lane would become a busy area (development) and inquired as to why Cotton Lane ends in a cul-de-sac. Mr. Sabatini stated that he would take this comment back to the Engineers.

The second project is Grand Avenue – Sun City continues to develop. Two lane improvement program from Clearview Boulevard up to Grand Avenue with an overpass at Grand Avenue. This project includes grade separations at Mountain View Boulevard and Clearview Boulevard in Sun City Grand. Sun City Grand is a funding partner for these projects. ADOT is participating with a \$1.7 million contribution for the Grand Avenue overpass. The overpass itself is approximately \$5 million. The entire project is approximately \$11 million. Mr. Sabatini stated that hopefully McDOT will take the project to bid in the next month or so.

Chairman Beyer and Paul Schwartz inquired as to opposition for this project in the Sun City area. Mr. Sabatini stated that there has been little comment from Sun City West; however, Sun City Grand had comments. Mr. Schwartz advised that there continues to be unhappiness in Sun City Grand regarding this project and believes that this will not be resolved within the next month. “McDOT is just going to close their eyes and the hell with the people that live out there and build this thing.” Mr. Sabatini stated that some of the issues are out of McDOT’s control. Mr. Schwartz stated that what is going out for bid is under McDOT’s control. Mr. Sabatini stated that Sun City Grand Developer is one of the driving forces behind getting this project constructed as soon as possible.

Another project starting at Grand Avenue which would cross the north side of Sun City West cross the Agua Fria River, then connect to Lake Pleasant Road and Happy Valley Road. This project is about a \$14 million construction project. 100% plans are complete. Target date to start this project is May 2001.

Mr. Sabatini concluded that McDOT is trying to preserve the regional nature of this facility. If, at some point in the future, it serves everyone’s best interest to bring this back into the MAG system as a regional facility of some type, Loop 303 will be preserved.

7. New ADOT Noise Policy

Fred Garcia of ADOT addressed the Committee regarding the new ADOT noise policy (refer to “Noise Abatement Policy” handout).

Mr. Garcia stated that in June of 1995, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sent out a memorandum to all state highway agencies mandating that a policy be implemented for the mitigation of traffic noise. The federal regulations, at that time, require that state highway noise levels be researched for mitigation as they approached the 67th decibels. Once highway noise approaches that level, mitigation is determined. ADOT developed a policy that was approved in 1996. The policy was less restrictive and more neighborhood friendly. The federal guidelines stated that as you developed your own policy, mitigation of noise would be approached at the federal level, and you could not look at mitigation until you exceed that point. Noise was mitigated at 65 decibels. In conducting this analysis, ADOT recognized that across the country the speed was researched at 55 miles per hour. Drivers are actually travelling faster and consequently producing more noise.

ADOT then updated their policy in March of 2000. Currently, ADOT considers the level of 64 decibels as the action level. This is when mitigation is researched for traffic noise. Arizona is in the top three states as being neighbor friendly. The analysis includes the horizontal and vertical controls, the speeds and elevation. The modeling is extremely sensitive to elevations and includes x,y,z coordinates. The model is quite detailed and it reproduces the conditions. There are situations where conditions might appear to be the same on both sides, when in reality there is an elevation difference and a different condition on the other side. This has been a hot topic in Maricopa County.

There is a lack of understanding regarding noise mitigation and how it works. A lot of neighborhoods that call on a daily basis are monitored and the noise appears to be perceived as quite loud. Focus is placed on traffic noise, human hearing capability, current and projected traffic conditions and horizontal/vertical controls.

Mr. Schwartz commented that complaints are coming in constantly regarding noise on Bell Road. There is a wall on each side of Bell Road. Mr. Schwartz inquired as to when the traffic is increased on a road or highway, does anyone research the area again. Grand Avenue is being improved, which indicates a large increase in traffic. Is noise mitigation going to be researched in the area of Grand Avenue? Mr. Garcia stated that ADOT researches capacity enhancement projects. Traffic noise must be doubled in order to make a difference; that would be doubling of traffic. It may be perceived to be louder; however, it is not.

Monitoring was conducted on Loop 303, Mr. Garcia stated that all indicators based on his monitoring efforts, which have been quite a few, is that the noise levels are not that high. Through modeling and projections right now, the noise levels are not high enough to discuss mitigation at this time.

Mr. Campbell commended ADOT for adopting a policy that actually protects residents more so than the federal standards do. Mr. Campbell referred to a section on the Red Mountain, Loop 202, as sound walls were constructed in an area in which the public did not think they were going to have sound walls.

Public Comment regarding noise mitigation

Ms. Deb Shriver, a resident in the area of 32nd Street and Shea, addressed the Committee regarding noise levels. Ms. Shiver stated that she has resided in the area for 9 years. Ms. Shiver stated that ADOT did not correctly build the walls. They were supposed to be chain link at Beryl. The area of 32nd Street and Shea (Onyx), there is a canyon effect. Berms were put up, which takes the noise, rolls it up and right into the neighborhood. Ms. Shiver stated there is a chain link fence, which angers her and the neighborhood. Ms. Shiver stated that they're measurements show the area hitting 68 to 76 dba. Ms. Shiver stated that her noise readings have gone up to 88 decibels. When it reaches 10 decibels above, this doubles your sound level, so you're not hearing 60 anymore or 70; you are hearing 140. There are residents taking No-doze to get to bed at night. That is not good living. We have been good neighbors. The problem arose when you opened up the road to Bell Road."

Mr. Garcia advised that berms actually work better than walls for noise retention.

Ms. Shiver continued by stating that the chain link fence is dangerous. "What are you going to do when a kid climbs that fence?"

Mr. Garcia stated that it has been his experience in visiting people who have conducted their own measurement, the method that is used, is not consistent with that of ADOT.

Ms. Shiver stated that there has not been any sound readings in her neighborhood. "You built the wall in the wrong place or I would have never bought on Onyx."

Mr. Garcia advised that numerous tests have been conducted in that area and the walls were built in the correct location. Mr. Garcia stated that he is familiar with the neighborhood. The meters used by ADOT are the most sensitive. The Radio Shack variety, plus or minus 5, which is way out of line.

Ms. Shiver stated that her partner in the home is a real estate agent and prior to buying this home, "we made the contract contingent upon going down to the ADOT building located on Camelback and 12th...and looking at the original diagrams." "If you look back in your records, you will find that Beryl Road had a chain link fence and berm and we cancelled that contract like that and went to Onyx because we figured you had a wall. They told me the chain link fence was temporary." "Sweetwater has a new sound wall. You see sound walls going up all over."

Chairman Beyer requested that ADOT take a second look at this concern and respond at the July 25th CTOC meeting.

Frank Schmuck, a Tempe citizen, inquired as to the level where mitigation should occur and what vehicles are in place to bring the noise levels down?

Mr. Garcia stated that in Arizona, typically noise walls and berms are used or a combination of the two. Combining noise walls with retaining walls sometimes works and sometimes an elevated roadway works as a huge berm at off and on-ramps. The design features and earth berms and walls are typically used in the southwest. Mr. Garcia stated that he could detail perception, which is not noise reduction, rather perceived noise reduction such as "a row of Oleanders will do great wonders". , According to our instrumentation they are not effective in reducing noise, but often, if you stop the line of sight with thick vegetation, you feel better about it." The waterfall is used to reduce the sound.

Mr. Garcia stated that 15% of the people have extremely sensitive hearing and all ADOT can do is depend on instruments. Mr. Garcia further stated that reasonableness, logistics and feasibility play into mitigation as well.

8. Call to the Public

Mr. William C. "Blue" Crowley addressed the Committee regarding the following issues:

Mr. Crowley asked the Committee to look at the Bike Map previously distributed by McDOT. He stated that the map shows the Grand Canal going from 40th Street to the freeway, then the other part starts at the other side of the freeway and goes from there. Mr. Crowley took exception to Mr. Eaton's statement that the section on I-17 is not a part of that bike route. Mr. Crowley also stated that to ensure a bike lane was planned for the area of Indian School and Thomas, the Alhambra Village Planning Committee attended ADOT meetings.

Mr. Crowley commented on the rail demonstration that the Governor's Committee on Transportation went through. "It's nice that when I came to ADOT and said, 'okay, you've invited everybody. Who is it that you invited?' ADOT refused to communicate that information with me." The public was not allowed to be part of that equation in that there were 250 seats and they only used 215. Mr. Crowley had requested that if there were any openings to get in touch with him. ADOT didn't reach out and get any of it done.

Mr. Crowley expressed concern that the MAG calendar does not recognize CTOC meetings where information is received that is relative to MAG. He pointed out that Bill Beyer Chairman of the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee is a member of the MAG Regional Council. "Being a part of MAG, CTOC is supposed to be getting it as a review part of the process." Mr. Crowley inquired as to where the MAG meetings are listed, some of the committees are listed; however, RPTA is not on the calendar. The State Transportation Board should be listed, CTOC should be listed." Mr. Crowley copied several items that were distributed to the CTOC members.

When is MAG going to start taking the public input from the CTOC meetings and relating it to the MAG Regional Council and Management Committee, to bring it to a communications level?

I-17 upgrade; Bus route 13 (Grand Avenue), connecting that routing. With TEA-21; it states that the secretary will okay no project that breaks a route.

Mr. Frank Schmuck addressed the Committee regarding rubberized asphalt. Mr. Schmuck stated that he has been communicating with Sacramento. Rubberized asphalt was founded by an Engineer in the City of Phoenix several years ago. Los Angeles and Sacramento have been successful with it. There is a 5 to 7 decibel drop between regular asphalt and rubberized asphalt. Mr. Schmuck stated that if you put up a non-absorbent type wall, you are certainly going to reflect, whether it be sound, heat, whatever energy it is. Maybe it's time to start reconsidering rubberized asphalt as a potential element to try to lessen of the complaints that we have and also, scientifically, bring the numbers down to an acceptable level.

Chairman Beyer requested research be conducted regarding ADOT's plan, etc. for rubberized asphalt.

9. The CTOC Regional Public Meeting will be held June 27th with the next regular CTOC meeting being July 25th at 5:00 p.m. in the ADOT Board Room.

10. CTOC Member Reports

Mr. Gawlitta stated that here in the Valley, there are about six different ways to signal left turns, and when you can make a left turn without absolutely taking your life into your own hands. As a matter of regional policy, Mr. Gawlitta would like MAG to take up the issue of uniform left signals throughout the valley. This would cut down on accidents by eliminating the guess factor as to whether or not you have a delayed left, a protected left, left after the green. In the process, Mr. Gawlitta would like to see the police department brought into the discussion. As the bus transportation grows in the valley, standardization would assist.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.